

# Open Research Online

---

The Open University's repository of research publications and other research outputs

## English Medium Instruction in Scandinavian Higher education: issues and controversies

### Conference or Workshop Item

#### How to cite:

Hultgren, Anna Kristina (2015). English Medium Instruction in Scandinavian Higher education: issues and controversies. In: English Medium Instruction: Global Views and Countries in Focus, 15 Nov 2015, University of Oxford, Department of Education.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© [not recorded]



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/crdemi-oxford/emi-events/emi-events-archive/english-medium-instruction-global-views-and-count>

---

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

---

[oro.open.ac.uk](http://oro.open.ac.uk)

# English-Medium Instruction in Scandinavian Higher Education: Issues and Controversies

Dr. Anna Kristina Hultgren  
The Open University

English Medium Instruction: Global Views and Countries in Focus  
Department of Education, University of Oxford

Wednesday 4 November 2015

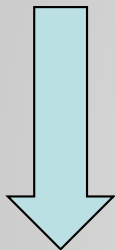
# Outline

- Definition of EMI
- EMI in European higher education
- Scandinavia: the EMI debate
- Conclusions: problems and solutions?

# Definitions of EMI

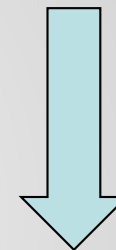
# EMI programs

Official language use

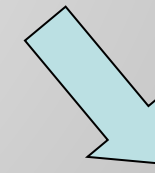


Mono/bilingual

*De facto* language use



Multilingual



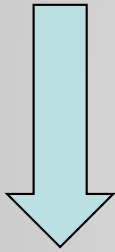
Exogenous

Endogenous

(Söderlundh 2012; Hultgren et al. 2014; Preece and Martin 2009)

# EMI programs

Official language use



Mono/bilingual

*De facto* language use



*Multilingual*

# EMI programs

Official language use

*De facto* language use

EMI operationalised as:

1. Proportion of HEI offering English-taught programs
2. Proportion of English-taught programs
3. Proportion of students enrolled in English-taught programs

(Wächter and Maiworm 2014)

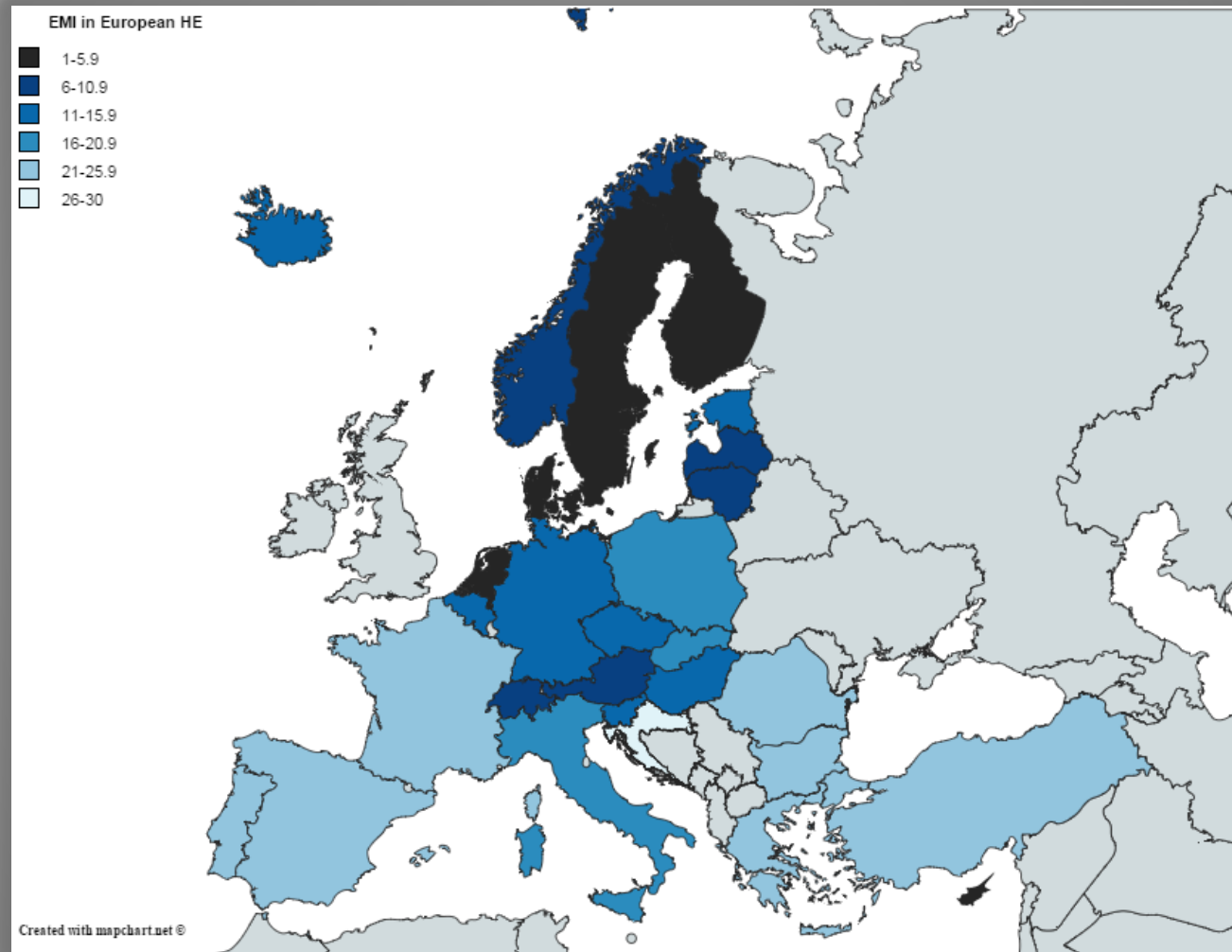


*Multilingual*

# EMI in European higher education

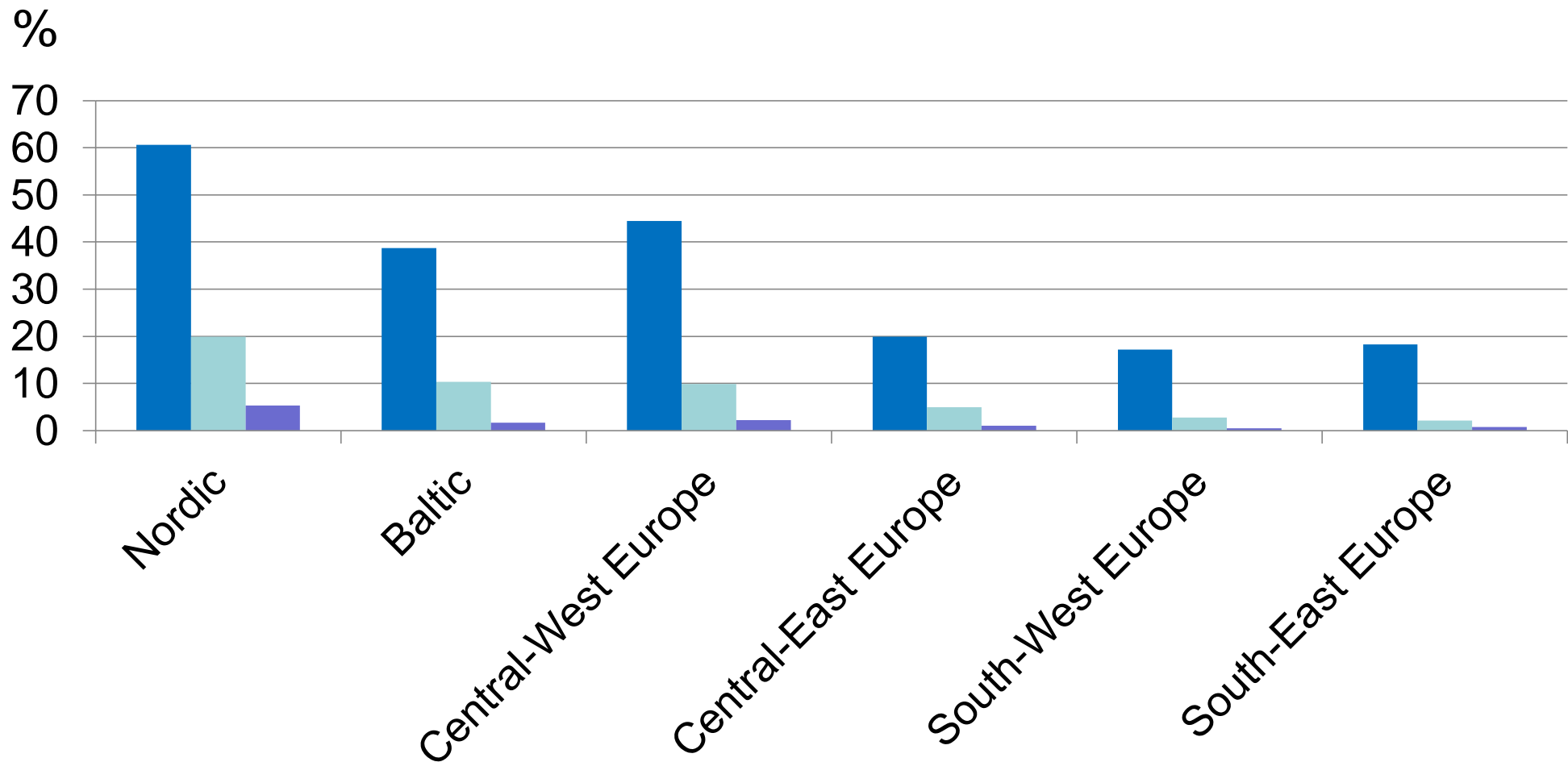


# EMI in European higher education



(Wächter and Maiworm 2014)

# North-south divide in EMI



(Wächter and Maiworm 2014)

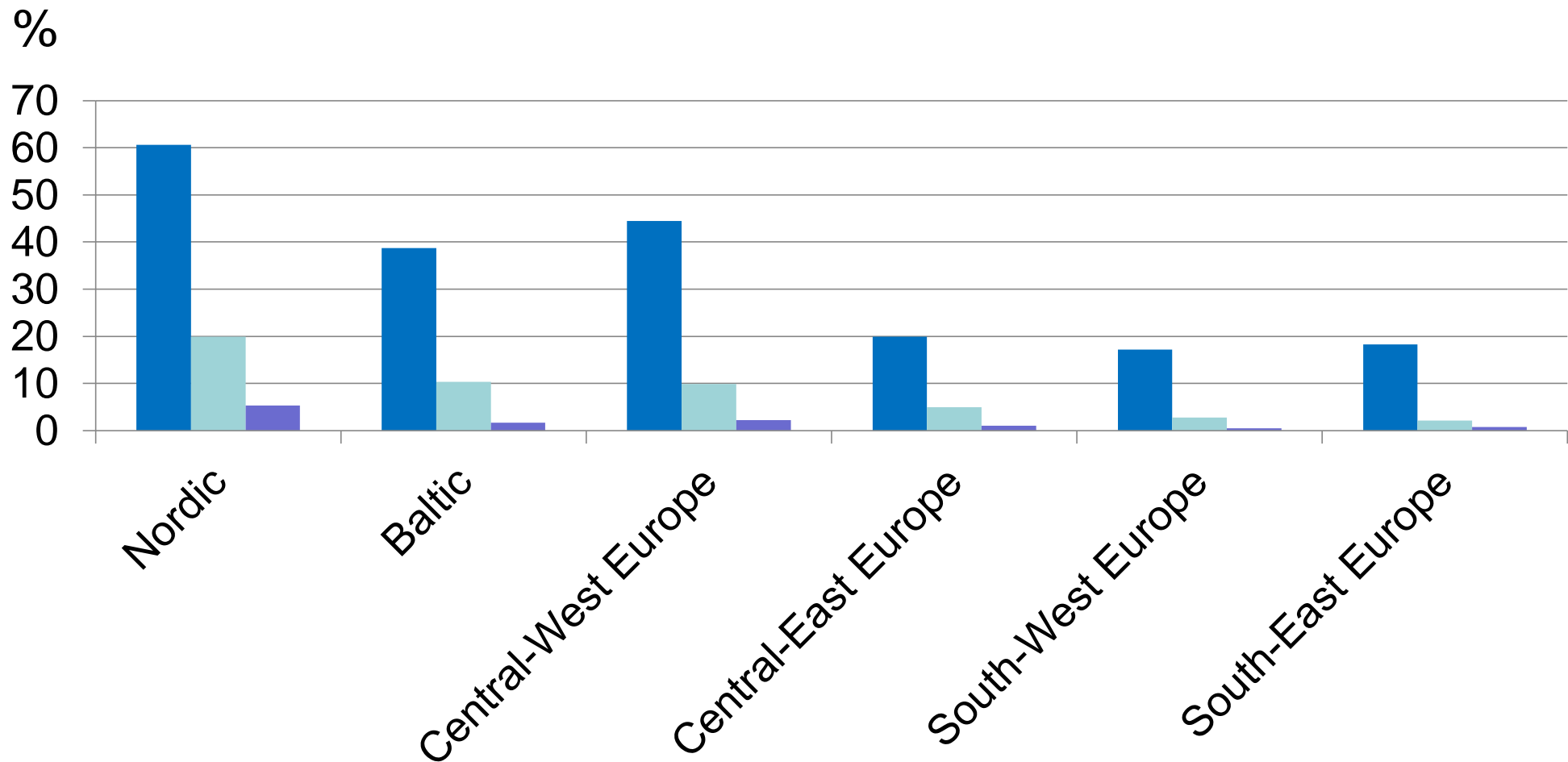
# Scandinavia: the EMI debate

# Scandinavia: the linguistic context

- Officially monolingual: Swedish, Danish, Norwegian
- English first foreign language
- English proficiency levels high

(European Commission 2012)

# North-south divide in EMI



(Wächter and Maiworm 2014)

# EMI debate in Scandinavia

## Pro-national language

- Ministry of Culture
- Language Councils
- Intellectual left
- Far-right politicians
- *Some* reseachers

## Pro-English

- Ministry of Science and Education
- University administrators
- Right-wing and centre politicians
- *Some* researchers

# EMI debate in Scandinavia

## Pro-national language

- Ministry of Culture
- Language Councils
- Intellectual left
- Far-right politicians
- *Some* researchers

## Pro-English

- Ministry of Science and Education
- University administrators
- Right-wing and centre politicians
- *Some* researchers

- The affected?

(Jensen and Thøgersen 2011; Dimova et al. 2014; Hultgren et al. 2014)

# Pro-national language policies

Central to the solution to the challenges faced by universities is the concept of **parallelingualism**. The purpose of a **parallelingual** strategy is to ensure the opportunity for researchers, graduates and students to operate internationally, while continuing to develop a scientific language and terminology in all areas, which is usable in a Danish-medium context.

(Danish Ministry of Culture 2008: 47, my translation)



# Pro-national language policies

The **parallel use of language** refers to the concurrent use of several languages within one or more areas. None of the languages abolishes or replaces the other; they are used in parallel.

(Nordic Council 2007: 93)

# EMI debate in Scandinavia

## Pro-national language

- Ministry of Culture
- Language Councils
- Intellectual left
- Far-right politicians
- *Some* researchers

## Pro-English

- Ministry of Science and Education
- University administrators
- Right-wing and centre politicians
- *Some* researchers

"Pro-English" policies: key words

**KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY**

**HUMAN CAPITAL**

**COMPETITION**

**INNOVATION**

**INTERNATIONALIZATION**

(Holborrow 2013)

"Pro-English" policies: key words

**KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY**

**HUMAN CAPITAL**

**COMPETITION**

**INNOVATION**

**INTERNATIONALIZATION**

(Holborrow 2013)

# "Pro-English" policies: trickle down

## Supranational

- OECD

## National

- Ministry of Education

## Institutional

- Internationalization strategies

# "Pro-English" policies

## **Deliberate EMI**

Norway (Ljosland 2015)

## **Non-deliberate EMI**

Denmark (Hultgren 2014)

(Costa and Coleman 2012; Hultgren 2014; Piller and Cho 2013)

# Growth of EMI in European higher education



**239% growth**

(Wächter and Maiworm 2014)

# Conclusion: is EMI a problem?

## Yes

EMI is a 'pandemic'

(Phillipson 2009)

## Neutral

EMI is 'still a rare option for the student population as a whole'

(Wächter and Maiworm 2014)

## No

'The international services must be strengthened'

(University of Copenhagen 2012)

The jury is still out...

...and don't wait for it to come in!



# Conclusion: solutions to EMI?

Pain relief

Cure

# Conclusion: solutions to EMI?

## Pain relief

- 'Translanguaging'
- English language support
- Better preparation

(Thøgersen et al. 2014; Klaassen 2010; Garcia and Wei 2013)

## Cure

- What education systems do we want?
- What is its role in the nation state and in the globalized society?
- What role should rankings and other performance indicators play?
- How can change be brought about in a globally interconnected system?

(Piller and Cho 2013; Ricento 2012; Block et al. 2012)

# Thank you!

# Selected References

- Costa, F. and J. A. Coleman (2012) A survey of English-medium instruction in Italian higher education. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 16(1) pp. 3–19.
- Dafouz, E., & M. Guerrini (2009). Introduction: Sharing experiences. In E. Dafouz, & M. C. Guerrini (Eds.), *CLIL across educational levels* (ix-xii). Madrid: Santillana Educación.
- Dearden, J. (2014) *EMI: A Growing Global Phenomenon*. British Council.
- Dimova, S., A.K. Hultgren & C. Jensen (2014). *English-medium instruction in European higher education*. Mouton.
- European Commission (2012) *Europeans and their Languages*. European Commission.
- Hultgren, A. K. (2014a) English language use at the internationalised universities of Northern Europe: Is there a correlation between Englishisation and world rank? (2014) *Multilingua: Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication* (3–4): 391-414
- Hultgren, A. K. (2014b) Whose parallellingualism? Overt and covert ideologies in Danish university language policies. *Multilingua: Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication* 33(1–2): 61–87.
- Hultgren, A. K., F. Gregersen & J. Thøgersen (eds). 2014. *English in Nordic Universities: Ideologies and practices*. Benjamins.
- Hultgren, A. K., C. Jensen, S. Dimova (2015) English-medium instruction in European higher education: From the north to the south. In S. Dimova, A.K. Hultgren & C. Jensen (eds) *English-Medium Instruction in European Higher Education*. Mouton. 1-15.
- Jensen, C. & J. Thøgersen (2011) University lecturers' attitudes towards English as the medium of instruction. *Iberica* 22: 13–33.
- Klaassen, R. G. & M Bos (2010) English language screening for scientific staff at Delft University of Technology. *Hermes—Journal of Language and Communication Studies* 45 (2010), 61-75.
- Mortensen, J. (2014) Language policy from below: language choice in student project groups in a multilingual university setting. *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development* 35(4). 425–442.
- Parr, C. (2014). English language use 'most significant internationalisation trend for HE'. *Times Higher Education*.
- Phillipson, R. (2009). *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*. London: Routledge.
- Söderlundh, H. (2012) Global policies and local norms: sociolinguistic awareness and language choice at an international university. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 216: 87–109.
- Wächter, B. & F. Maiworm (2014) *English-Taught Programmes in European Higher Education: The State of Play in 2014*. Lemmens, ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education.